

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 023841

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: USINJC, PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: INDO-U.S. RELATIONS

1. INDIAN DCM VENKATESWARAN, ACCOMPANIED BY FIRST SECRETARY RAJAN, CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS JANUARY 30 TO DISCUSS INDO-U.S. RELATIONS AND BANGLADESH. BROWN (NEA/INS) SAT IN.

2. ON BEHALF OF THE GOI, VENKATESWARAN REQUESTED CLARIFICATION OF CURRENT USG ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INDO-U.S. JOINT COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES, PARTICULARLY THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO MEET IN DELHI NEXT WEEK. DUBS RESPONDED THAT WE INTEND THAT THESE ACTIVITIES, WHICH THE SECRETARY AND

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FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN AGREED IN OCTOBER SHOULD BE

INSULATED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FROM THE FLUCTUATIONS OF OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS, GO FORWARD. WE WERE HOPEFUL THAT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL WOULD COME UP WITH CONCRETE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RESULTS. VENKATESWARAN AGREED THAT WAS ALSO GOI POSITION.

3. ON BROADER QUESTION OF CURRENT BILATERAL POLITICAL RELATIONS, DUBS COMMENTED THAT OUR EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN DISTURBED BY RECENT UNWARRANTED ALLEGATIONS BY

MRS. GANDHI AGAINST US, AND WE HAD BEEN OBLIGED TO RESPOND, BUT IN A MEASURED WAY. GOI MUST RECOGNIZE THAT GOOD RELATIONS MUST BE TWO-WAY STREET BASED ON RECIPROCITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT.

4. VENKATESWARAN INQUIRED WHETHER APPARENT DELAY IN APPROVAL OF SHIPMENTS OF U.S. FUEL FOR TARAPUR WAS LINKED TO DOWNTURN IN POLITICAL RELATIONS. DUBS SAID THAT WE WOULD AGAIN CHECK ON STATUS OF SHIPMENTS BUT THAT THERE WAS NO LINKAGE. (FYI: WE WILL SEND DELHI REPORT ON THIS PROBLEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.)

5. SPECULATING ON PERSONAL BASIS, VENKATESWARAN WONDERED WHETHER BY OUR RECENT PROTESTS TO GOI WE HAD BEEN PREPARING DIPLOMATIC GROUND FOR A NEW DECISION ON ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN. HE HAD HEARD RUMORS OF POSSIBLE MAJOR SALES, INCLUDING SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT AND TANKS. HE SAID SUCH A DECISION WOULD RESULT IN STRONG REACTION FROM NEW DELHI. DUBS INDICATED THAT, WHILE OUR POLICY WAS BY NO MEANS FROZEN IN CONCRETE, ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN THAT MIGHT CAUSE CONCERN TO INDIA WERE NOT ON THE TABLE AT PRESENT. MODEST SALES OF DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT ARE, HOWEVER, BEING UNDERTAKEN.

6. ON BANGLADESH, DUBS RECALLED THE SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES TO CHAVAN IN PARIS THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN BANGLADESH AND INDIA SINCE THIS IS IMPORTANT TO STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA. VENKATESWARAN EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS ALSO GOI POLICY, NOTING INTER ALIA THAT INDIA CONTINUES TO HELP TRAIN THE BANGLADESH

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FORCES, BOTH IN INDIA AND IN BANGLADESH. WHEN DUBS ASKED ABOUT REPORTS THAT WE HAD FROM DACCA THAT A BANGALEE, "TIGER" SIDDIGUI, WAS CONDUCTING BORDER RAIDS INTO BANGLADESH WITH INDIAN ARMS AND EQUIPMENT, VENKATESWARAN UNDERSCORED THAT NO ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORT WAS BEING GIVEN BY THE INDIANS TO SIDDIGUI.

7. VENKATESWARAN CLOSED THE CONVERSATION BY EXPRESSING

HOPE THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO EXCHANGE
VIEWS ON BOTH BILATERAL AND REGIONAL QUESTIONS. DUBS
AGREED THAT CONTINUING DIALOGUE WAS IMPORTANT TO BOTH
SIDES. KISSINGER

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